



**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
WESTERN REGION
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH**



AUGUST 26, 2003

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Medal Winners to be Recognized: The 2003 Department of Commerce medal winners will be honored during a ceremony in Washington, D.C. on September 18. Andy Bailey, WCM at WFO Las Vegas, will receive a Gold Medal, and WFO Medford will receive a Silver Medal. The Gold and Silver Medals are the most distinguished employee awards presented annually by the Commerce Department.

Andy was selected for the 2003 Group Award for actions during the Daley Wildfire Complex in June 2002. He teamed with former fellow WFO Rapid City forecaster Eric A. Helgeson and Charles M. Baker (WFO Riverton, Wyoming) in providing forecast information that directly saved the lives of 40 firefighters the evening of June 29, 2002. Diligently watching developments of wildfires and weather conditions in an area of northeast Wyoming covered by the two WFOs, the three weather forecasters simultaneously realized the perils posed by an approaching cold front. They contacted the dispatcher at the Casper Dispatch Center with the new information, providing her with crucial information about the earlier arrival and higher winds and wind shift accompanying the cold front. The dispatch center immediately radioed incident commanders in the area to send their firefighting crews to safety zones because a dramatic change in wind speed and direction would occur within 10 minutes. All the incident commanders heeded the warning, disengaged firefighting crews and moved them to safety zones.

WFO Medford will receive the Silver Medal for its outstanding service to its customers during the summer of 2002's wildfire season (see August 12 WRH Staff notes for additional details).

Congratulations to all of our 2003 DOC medal winners. We're proud of your efforts.



New MIC at WFO San Diego: On August 31, Jim Purpura will assume his duties as the new Meteorologist in Charge at WFO San Diego. A 22-year NWS veteran, Jim has held a variety of forecast and management positions. His most recent assignment was the MIC at the NWS forecast office in Corpus Christi, Texas. Previously, he served as the Warning Coordination Meteorologist in Norman, Oklahoma, and as a public, aviation, and marine forecaster in Chicago. His extensive experience working with emergency management, local government, the business community as well as the public. He recently led the Weather

Service's assessment team that looked at the nation's worst tornado outbreak in recent history in the Midwest U.S. states in May. Jim and his family are busy getting settled in Southern California. Welcome to the Western Region, Jim, we all look forward to working with you.

DEPUTY REGIONAL DIRECTOR

WFO Las Vegas Participates in Bio-Terrorism Exercise: WFO Las Vegas played an important role in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security two-week bio-terrorism exercise August 18-29. The exercise, Determined Promise 2003 (DP '03), was conducted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Determined Promise is an annual exercise conducted by U.S. Northern Command and sponsored by the U.S. Department of Defense. The exercise scenario checked the emergency preparedness plans of federal, state, and county agencies and tested the interagency coordination of biological incident response efforts. The NWS coordinated receipt of EAS message traffic and coordinated with local agencies.



Billings IMET Interviewed: NWS Billings arranged media interviews on August 20 with their Incident Meteorologist, Dan Borsum. Dan described the role of NOAA Incident Meteorologist (IMET) and shared information about his deployments during the past two years. The story was carried by the local ABC, CBS, NBC and FOX TV stations as well as the *Billings Gazette* (see the story at:

<http://www.billingsgazette.com/index.php?id=1&display=rednews/2003/08/21/build/local/70-fires-vital.inc>



Emergency Distress Beacon Campaign: A recent announcement by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ruled that Personal Locator Beacons are authorized for individual use effective July 1. The beacons will operate similarly to the locator beacons now on aircraft and boats that use NOAA satellites to receive the distress signal.

A public service announcement (PSA) campaign was launched by NOAA Headquarters during the 2003 Outdoor Retailers Summer Market held in Salt Lake

City, August 14-17. More than 17,000 people attended the event.

NOAA PA and Western Region PAO, Marilu Trainor, conducted more than 30 interviews and provided background information to national, regional, and local media prior to and during the show. The news stories focused on how all emergency distress beacons - including EPIRBs (used by commercial vessels), ELTs (used by aircraft) and PLBs are required to be registered with NOAA. Action/adventure author, Clive Cussler, has lent his name to the outreach campaign for the beacons. NOAA has provided 30

and 60 second television spots and radio PSAs to all commercial, cable and education channels.

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION

Statement of the Week: This week's statement of the week is a Flood Statement written by General Forecaster Melissa Goering of WFO Tucson. This Flood Statement is a great example of an overall update of the status of the advisories and warnings within the CWA. It also informs the reader in a concise and understandable manner of the current and expected weather conditions with respect to flooding. The statement even contains a call to action.

WGUS85 KTWC 150245
FLSTWC
AZZ032-150500-

FLOOD STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE TUCSON AZ
740 PM MST THU AUG 14 2003

...URBAN AND SMALL STREAM FLOOD ADVISORY FOR CENTRAL PIMA COUNTY HAS BEEN ALLOWED TO EXPIRE AT 715 PM...

...URBAN AND SMALL STREAM FLOOD ADVISORY FOR SOUTHEAST PIMA COUNTY HAS BEEN ALLOWED TO EXPIRE AT 745 PM MST...

...FLASH FLOOD WARNING FOR WESTERN PIMA COUNTY EXTENDED UNTIL 1000 PM MST...

...FLASH FLOOD WARNING FOR NORTHEASTERN PIMA COUNTY EXTENDED UNTIL 1000 PM MST...

AT 730 PM MST...NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE DOPPLER RADAR INDICATED DIMINISHING THUNDERSTORMS OVER CENTRAL AND SOUTHEASTERN PIMA COUNTY. ONLY LIGHT PRECIPITATION CONTINUES OVER THESE AREAS....THUS THE URBAN AND SMALL STREAM FLOOD ADVISORIES FOR CENTRAL AND SOUTHEASTERN PIMA COUNTY HAS BEEN ALLOWED TO EXPIRE.

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE DOPPLER RADAR CONTINUED TO SHOW THUNDERSTORMS WITH HEAVY RAIN EXTENDING FROM ARE WEST OF ORGAN PIPE NATIONAL MONUMENT TO AJO...MOVING SOUTHWEST AT 10 MPH. RADAR PRECIPITATION ESTIMATES INDICATED 3.0 TO 4.0 INCHES OVER THREE HOURS IN THE SAME LOCATION. THUS FLASH FLOOD WARNING HAS BEEN EXTENDED IN THE AJO AREA UNTIL 1000 PM MST.

ALTHOUGH THUNDERSTORMS HAVE MOVED OUT OF THE TUCSON AREA.

WATER CONTINUES TO MOVE DOWN CANADA DEL ORO WASH THROUGH ORO VALLEY. THUS THE FLASH FLOOD WARNING FOR NORTHEAST PIMA COUNTY HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO 1000 PM MST.

REMEMBER THAT FLASH FLOODING CAN OCCUR MANY MILES DOWNSTREAM FROM THE HEAVIEST RAIN...EVEN IN AREAS WHERE RAIN HAS NOT FALLEN AT ALL.

DO NOT DRIVE AROUND BARRICADES. MOTORISTS SHOULD USE CAUTION AS LOW LYING DIPS IN THE ROAD MAY BE FLOODED.

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GOERING

StormReady Advisory Board Meeting: Jeff Lorens (Western Region MSD) participated in the annual StormReady Advisory Board Meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii, August 12-14. The National StormReady Advisory Board was represented by NWS Headquarters (OS51, Awareness Branch), each Regional WCM, and representatives from National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) and the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM). The board discussed and evaluated several ideas to improve the StormReady and TsunamiReady programs, including improved methods to serve emergency managers, improvements to the StormReady - TsunamiReady recognition process, and StormReady web site improvements. As part of this year's meeting, the Board met with staff members of Hawaiian Senator Akaka and Congressman Case. Jeff LaDouce, Pacific Region Director, briefed the congressional staff on the benefits of the StormReady and TsunamiReady programs. The board also visited WFO Honolulu and toured the Richard H. Hagemeyer Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

Outreach: WFO Eureka participated in the Humboldt County Fair Tsunami Room as part of the Redwood Coast Tsunami Workgroup. The NWS contributed a display board on tsunami buoys, tsunami warnings, TsunamiReady, and NOAA Weather Radio. Also, a kiosk was provided with photos of the 1964 Crescent City tsunami and animations of tsunamis. Additionally, the WFO provided the equipment for a tsunami theater. About 6000 people visited the room this year.

New NWR Transmitters: Two new NOAA Weather Radio transmitters were dedicated in recent weeks. WFO Eureka dedicated a new NOAA Weather Radio transmitter on Laughlin Ridge near Ukiah, California, on August 15. The new transmitter serves interior Mendocino and southern Lake Counties. In addition, the Broadus, Montana, transmitter was dedicated on August 13. Funding for both transmitters was made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service.

Updated Fire Weather web page: Check out [Http://www.noaa.gov/fireweather](http://www.noaa.gov/fireweather) for the latest summary of the various NOAA organizations that provide support to land management agencies as part of wildfires and hazardous materials spills. Two good

background articles are included which explain the role of NOAA agencies as well as the technical equipment used by IMETs in the field.

SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

WR IFPS SOO/DOH Whitepaper II: The WR SOO writing team completed and disseminated the final version of the WR IFPS SOO/DOH Whitepaper II. This report was designed to define a series of specific recommendations and associated actions for each of the eight primary recommendations outlined in the original SOO IFPS Whitepaper. The final version incorporated comments from all NWS SOOs/DOHs. This document will be used by the IFPS Science Steering Team (ISST) to initially support their specific IFPS science-related proposals to NWS Headquarters and the NWS Science and Technology (S&T) Committee.

Great Divide Workshop: WFO Glasgow hosted the Great Divide Workshop on August 26-27, 2003. The workshop focused on operational forecast problems that occur in the inter-mountain region and the northern Great Plains. Participants included NWS forecasters from several surrounding states, NWS National Center personnel, and Environment Canada forecasters from Alberta and B.C. Featured guest speakers included: Dr. James Moore (Saint Louis University), Dr. Walt Lyons (FMA Research Inc.), Brad Grant (Warning Decision Training Branch), Ed O'Lenic (Chief, NOAA's Climate Operations Branch, CPC), Robert Kelly (Chief, NOAA's Forecast Operations Branch, HPC), Dan McCarthy, (WCM, NOAA's Storm Prediction Center), and Kirby Cook (WRH, SSD).

Tenth Annual Workshop on Weather Prediction in the Intermountain West: The Tenth Annual Workshop on Weather Prediction in the Intermountain West will be held Thursday, November 6, 2003, at the Desert Research Institute (DRI) in Reno, Nevada. The objectives of this annual workshop are to discuss major issues related to operational meteorology over the western United States and to foster interactions between researchers, applied meteorologists, and other professionals who rely on operational weather forecasts or data.

This year marks the first time that the workshop will be held in Reno, along the eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada. With such a backdrop, the theme of the workshop will be "Meteorology of the Sierra Nevada." Presentations on operational meteorology issues relevant to both the western and eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada, and other regions in the west whose weather is impacted by the Sierra Nevada, are encouraged. The workshop is being hosted by the DRI Division of Atmospheric Sciences.

Individuals interested in presenting or simply attending the workshop may register online. Go to the workshop web page at <http://www.conferences.dri.edu/WxPrediction> and click on the link for online registration. **The deadline for submitting a one-paragraph abstract has been extended to September 12 with conference registration requested by October 17.** There are NO registration fees. Please register as soon as possible.

SYSTEMS OPERATIONS DIVISION

NWR: The Navajo Mountain UHF radio link will become narrow band compliant this week. A site survey will be conducted on the Navajo Mountain NWR (WXM-89). This NWR serves the Lake Powell area.

AWIPS Activities: Several WR sites have installed AWIPS OB2 and most WR sites are on the OB2 installation schedule. Starting October 1, OB2 installations will be restricted to three (3) sites per day. If your site is not on the installation calendar for OB2 WR/SOD recommends that you get on the schedule as soon as possible.

The OB2.1 maintenance release will be beta tested from Tuesday, September 2, through Friday, September 5. Eighteen patches/fixes are included in this maintenance release. WRHQ (VHW) will be a beta test site.

FACILITIES UPS Batteries: A new cellwatch battery monitoring system was installed on the Mitsubishi UPS at the Salt Lake City Forecast Office. The readings from this battery monitoring system were added to the intranet on August 21 by Al Martinelli and Lee Jenson. The cellwatch is in the test mode at this time and is designed to give alarms for high or low resistance and allow for monitoring of the condition of the batteries via a web browser and the NWS Western Region INTRANET. The parameters are set so that alarms are given when a battery is going bad; thus, giving us enough time to order new batteries before a failure occurs. If this test is successful, we will phase in these systems at every office UPS. We would also look at how to install such a system at the RDA sites as well. Stay tuned for further developments.

DuPont Safety Training in Salt Lake City: DuPont Safety Training is just around the corner. The Western Region two-day DuPont Safety Training "Managing Safety: Systems That Work for Senior Leaders" will be held in Salt Lake City on September 16-17, 2003, in the Federal Building.

Safety Quote: The first solution to a "process" safety problem should always be to get rid of the hazard, not control it. -- Dennis Hendershot